

WIT AND JUSTICE IN MISSOURI.

It is well known that some of the Judges in Missouri are reluctant to enforce the law against ministers of the gospel for exercising their profession without having taken the test oath, and avail themselves of every pretence to discharge those who are accused. We tell the following tale as 'tis told to us vouching for nothing:

Three ministers charged with the crime of preaching "the glorious gospel of the Son of God," were arraigned before a certain Judge. They were regularly indicted, and it was understood that the proof against them was very clear.

"Are you a preacher," said the Judge to one of them. "Yes, sir," replied the culprit. "To what denomination do you belong?" "I am a Christian, sir." (With dignity.) "A Christian! What do you mean by that? Are not all preachers Christians?" "I belong to the sect usually called, but wrongly, called Campbellites." (Not so much dignity.) "Oh! Then you believe in baptising people in order that they may be born again, do you?" "I do sir." (Defiantly.)

"Mr. Sheriff discharge that man! He is an innocent man! he is indicted for preaching the gospel, and there isn't a word of gospel in the stuff that he preaches! its only some of Alexander Campbell's nonsense. Discharge the man!"

Exit Campbellite, greatly rejoicing.

"Are you a preacher?" said the Judge, addressing the next criminal. "I am sir," said the miscreant. "Of what denomination are you?" "I am a Methodist, sir." (His look showed it.) "Do you believe in falling from grace?" "I do, sir." (without hesitation.) "Do you believe in sprinkling people, instead of baptising them?" "I believe that people can be baptised by sprinkling." (Much offended.) "Do you believe in baptising babies?" "It is my opinion, sir, that infants ought to be baptised." (Indignantly.) "Not a word of scripture for anything of the kind, sir!" shouted his Honor. "Mr. Sheriff, turn that man loose! He is no preacher of the gospel! The gospel is the truth, and there isn't a word of truth in what that man teaches! Turn him loose! It's ridiculous to indict men on such frivolous pretences! Turn him loose!"

Methodist disappears, not at all hurt in his feelings by the judicial abuse he had received.

"What are you?" said the Judge to the third felon. "Some people call me a preacher, sir." (Meekly.) "What is your denomination?" "I am a Baptist." (Head up.) His Honor's countenance fell and he looked sober and sad. After a pause he said; "Do you believe in salvation by grace?" "I do." (Firmly.) "Do you teach that immersion only is baptism?" "That is my doctrine." (Earnestly.) "And you baptise none but those who believe in Jesus Christ?" "That is my faith and practice." (With emphasis.) "My friend, I fear it will go hard with you; I see you are indicted for preaching the gospel, and it appears to me that by your own confession you are guilty."

Baptist looks pretty blue.

"May it please your Honor," said the Baptist's counsel, springing to his feet, "that man never preached the gospel, I have heard him say a hundred times that he only tried. I have heard him try myself." "Mr. Sheriff, discharge this man! He's not indicted for trying! There's nothing said about the mere effort! let him go, sir! Turn him loose! send him about his business! I am astonished that the State's attorney should annoy the Court with frivolous indictments!"

Exit Baptist, determined to "try" again. Court adjourned.

"God save the State and this Honorable Court!" exclaimed the Sheriff. "Amen!" said the three preachers. —[Ex.]

NAIL-MAKING MACHINES.—Mr. R. C. Robinson has patented a nail-making machine on a new principle. He claims that beside making nails with good points and heads, it turns them out much more quickly than the machines hitherto used, these latter producing of 1½-inch nails 180 per minute, while the new machine makes with ease 380 in the same time. The old machines are fed by hand, requiring a person to each machine, but this is self feeding, and one person can easily tend two machines. The old machines are fed with a strip of the same width as the length of the nails to be cut from it; thus 1½-inch nails require strips of 1½ inch wide to be fed by hand into the machine; but the new machine, for the same length of nails, feeds itself with a strip 6 inches wide, detaching four nails from the strip at each cut.

THE DESERT OF SAHARA.—The discoveries of recent African explorers have dispelled many of the popular notions concerning the great desert of Sahara. It used to be described as a nearly level, sandy plain. This plain it is now ascertained, does not exist, except at its eastern and western extremities. The central portions rise, in the form of terraces, to 900 or 1,200 feet above the valleys of the Atlas and Soudan. They are interspersed with ravines and granite hills. Barth speaks of mountains 4,000 or 5,000 feet high. In general, however, the surface of the desert is flat or slightly undulating; in some places covered with a thick bed of sand, in others hard and flinty. Every aspect confirms the opinion of Humboldt, that the desert is the belt of a former sea, elevated by a geological convulsion. The traveler, almost at every step, meets with mounds of fossil shell and other debris of marine animals. There are immense deposits of rock salt, in some places as pure as marble and so compact as to serve in the construction of houses. Soudan derives salt from this source. The effervescence of nitre or saltpeter is almost everywhere apparent. Lions, tigers and other ferocious animals with which the desert has in imagination been peopled, are met with only in the forest or the oasis, where alone they can find food or water. The lion is king of the desert only in poetry. Man is the true wild animal with whom the traveler dreads an encounter, and bandits infest every caravan route in the Sahara. The Sahara is not always destitute of water. In passing between the tropics the sun carries with him heavily-laden nimbus clouds, which not meeting with any mountains high enough to condense their moisture and cause it to fall at intervals, descends occasionally by their own gravity and drop their water treasures in gushing torrents which fill every ravine. It is a deluge which lasts but a moment, the water disappears in the permeable soil as fast as it came, and forms extensive sheets of water a short distance below the surface. This fact has been revealed by numerous soundings. Already excellent artesian wells, sunk by French engineers, have created verdant oases in places where every vestige of vegetation appeared to be eternally buried beneath the sand. From time immemorial the Arabs have sunk in the open deserts wells several hundred feet deep, till they met with the watery bed which they call the subterranean sea.

SCENE AT THE BERLIN THEATRE.—A letter in the Paris Temps, dated at Berlin, gives a glowing description of the scene which took place at the opera-house on the evening of the 6th inst., on which occasion the representation was for the benefit of the wounded soldiers. The whole court was present, and not a seat was vacant. When the king entered, at about half-past seven, the audience arose and received him most enthusiastically. The performance commenced with the Seige March (the march to victory) of Taubert. When the curtain rose the whole company sang a loyal song, which was composed expressly for the occasion. Each strophe was received with applause, and when the tenor, Herr Woworksy, sang the following strophe:

"And when throughout the land shall float
The flag of Union, then we'll shout,
'Hail! Emperor of Germany,'"

the whole audience arose and become so excited that the singing was for a long time interrupted. After the last verse, the cries and bravos burst forth again, and the national hymn was demanded from all parts of the theatre. The orchestra complied with the wish of the audience, and all present—princes, princesses, and citizens—joined in the chorus. The enthusiasm had no limit. I never saw anything like it. The receipts amounted to nearly £900.

SINGULAR LEGAL OPINION.—A Memphis lawyer relates, if we may rely upon the statement of the Memphis Bulletin, that while in Carroll County last week he had attended the preliminary trial of a man before a country magistrate, charged with stealing corn from a neighbor's crib. The evidence went to show that the defendant had been found with his hand in an aperture in the crib, safely fastened in a steel trap, which the owners of the crib had set for the purpose of catching the thief who had been preying upon his grain. It was also evident that two empty corn sacks were found lying at the feet of the entrapped individual. The decision of the magistrate was that there was no proof that the prisoner had stolen any corn, and as to being caught in a steel trap, any gentleman had a perfect right to stick his hand in one if he felt inclined to do so.

THE PLAGUE OF GRASSHOPPERS.—Few persons in the State have any idea of the proportions of the grasshopper plague on the Plains of the far West. The Kansas City Journal is informed by John R. Griffin, Esq., who has just returned from Junction City, Kansas, that that city is overrun with the insects. They come in swarms from the west so thick that the sun is hidden wherever they appear. They are stripping corn fields, and eating up the grass, weeds, and leaves on the trees. The Lawrence Tribune, makes mention of their advent there and says "their ravages have so far been confined to a track twelve miles wide and three hundred miles long. Some idea of the vast quantity of these insects may be inferred from the fact of their having got on the railroad track of the Union Pacific road in such numbers as to cause the wheels to slip on the rail. The freight train due at Wyandotte Saturday evening, was actually detained several hours in consequence of the grasshoppers having taken possession of the road."—St. Louis Dispatch, Sep. 15.

The Union Pacific Railroad, on the 11th of Sep., had track laid 28 miles this side of Fort Kearney; and Gen. Dodge, Chief engineer, says work upon the road will not be suspended during the winter, and informs the Denver News that it will cross the South Platt by Nov. 1, and be finished within 40 miles of Julesburg by Jan. 1, 1867. At such rate of progress trains sent from here next season for freight and passengers will, probably, not have to go farther east than Julesburg, if so far.

The German journals publish the subjoined:—At Frankfort General de Manteuffel did not always find absolute acquiescence to his wishes. When he told the American Minister that he (the General) could not prevent Prussian soldiers being billeted on him or his countrymen, Mr. Murphy contented himself with at once putting on his hat and replying, "General, permit me to observe that our fleet is in the Baltic," and withdrew. No Americans had any military assigned to them.

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